



**North Carolina State University Chancellor Search
Charge to the Search Advisory Committee
UNC President Peter Hans
September 10, 2024**

Selecting confident, capable leadership for our public universities is among the most important responsibilities of the UNC System president. These institutions are part of the vital infrastructure of our state, and sound leadership matters far beyond the boundaries of campus. Every one of our public universities deserves a chancellor well-matched to their strengths, their needs, and their next chapter.

I believe that North Carolina State's next chapter will be extraordinary. Randy Woodson's chancellorship has been among the longest and most accomplished in American higher education, marked by *Think & Do* optimism, growing impact, and steady service to the people of North Carolina. This university has set the model for a modern land-grant institution, attending to its age-old responsibilities of outreach and uplift while venturing boldly into new disciplines, new technologies, and new partnerships that have helped drive incredible progress in North Carolina.

We are building from an incredibly strong foundation and entering this search with the wind at our backs. Applications to NC State have doubled since Chancellor Woodson took the helm, rising to 49,000 last year for a freshman class of 7,350. The endowment has quadrupled to \$2.2 billion on the strength of great fundraising and smart stewardship. Graduation rates have jumped from 78% to 85%, reflecting a vital focus on student success. And NC State now conducts nearly \$600 million in research every year, making it the sixth-most prolific research institution among universities without a medical school and the second best in the nation for technology transfer. Centennial Campus has grown into an economic and architectural gem, the envy of urban research campuses everywhere. That kind of track record is the best gift any departing leader can offer.

The groundwork for a worthy successor to the Woodson era begins right now, with the dedicated work of the search advisory committee. The decisions we make together — and the collaborative spirit we bring to our shared work — will go a long way in building successful momentum for North Carolina State's next leader. We all have a deep sense of commitment to this institution — to its faculty, staff, students and alumni — and I'm honored to work alongside all of you as we do our part for the future of the Wolfpack.

I'm especially grateful to our search advisory committee chair, Ed Stack, for agreeing to lead this effort. With the goodwill and expertise we have assembled on this committee, I'm confident this will be an energizing, encouraging experience that will make our colleagues and constituents proud.

The purpose of my charge to this committee is to ensure that we all have a clear understanding of our goals and the steps we'll follow to get there. There are three broad areas that will help guide us:

First, our responsibilities as members of the search advisory committee.

Second, the traits I consider most important in NC State's next chancellor.

And third, the process we'll follow to attract great candidates and recommend strong finalists.

Role of Search Advisory Committee Members

Each of you was selected for this committee because of your experience, your longstanding commitment to this university, and your appreciation for what the chancellor's job entails. You all have insights and perspectives that will aid the search, and all of you share an abiding respect for NC State and what it means to North Carolina.

Under UNC Policy 200.8, the Policy on Chancellor Searches and Election, our duty as members of the search advisory committee is not to view ourselves as representatives of particular interest groups, but as members of a team with a single shared objective: to find and recommend the strongest possible candidates to lead NC State. In fulfilling that responsibility, we are charged with gathering input from a broad range of constituents; crafting a leadership statement that summarizes the ideal experience and qualities of a new chancellor; evaluating candidates and conducting interviews; and finally proposing an unranked slate of at least three highly qualified individuals for consideration by the NC State Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will, in turn, nominate at least three unranked candidates to me. I will carefully consider each of those candidates and nominate one individual for election by the Board of Governors.

Your dedicated participation throughout this process is important, and I ask that you fully commit to attending all search committee meetings and candidate interviews. I plan to personally

participate in meetings and interviews, and I am looking forward to spending time with you and discussing the future of NC State in the months ahead.

I also ask that we keep an open mind about the candidates we'll be assessing, carefully evaluating individuals on the basis of their experience, their vision, and their leadership qualities. I believe a broad-minded approach is the right way to find a leader who can best serve the long-term needs and ambitions of this institution.

We are all bound to strict standards of confidentiality in our work. Breaking that pledge can jeopardize the search process, cause real reputational harm to the institution, and potentially damage relationships and career prospects for candidates who have placed their trust in us. Out of respect for your fellow committee members and the individuals who choose to participate in this process, please keep our deliberations in confidence.

Finally, let's give proper deference to our committee leadership. Chair Stack will serve as the sole spokesperson for the search advisory committee and the arbiter of all questions about the search process. Please refer any outside inquiries or questions about process and procedure to him so that all information we share is consistent with state law, university policy, and our committee charge. For legal advice, Chair Stack will call on NC State's outstanding general counsel, Allison Newhart, who will serve as legal counsel to this committee. Please direct all questions you have, legal or otherwise, to Chair Stack.

Traits of a Strong Campus Leader

The goal of our search is not to replicate Randy Woodson, who has been a defining leader for this chapter of NC State's story. It is to find the right leader for NCSU's next chapter, someone who can seize the opportunities at hand in one of the fastest-growing, fastest-changing states in the country. With NC State's incredibly strong fundamentals, its connection with every aspect of North Carolina's dynamic economy, and its deep well of goodwill from alumni, the public, and policymakers, I have no doubt we will see extraordinarily talented candidates for the chancellor's role.

Leadership of a large, research-intensive, land-grant university takes a special kind of talent and vision. Given the dynamism of North Carolina and the far-reaching investments made over the last few decades, I believe NC State is well-positioned to continue to grow its national profile and cement its place among the nation's preeminent institutions in many emerging fields.

As we look for someone who can capitalize on this university's promise, here are some of the key traits I believe we should consider:

- ❖ *An eagerness to put knowledge to work. NC State's great strength.* The heart of its *Think & Do* ethos is applying cutting-edge research and scholarship to real-world problems. This institution has grown great because it is in constant conversation with the people of this state with the needs and challenges of communities in all 100 counties, with the opportunities and concerns of businesses and policymakers in every possible field. The right chancellor for NC State will relish those connections and understand that research and scholarship go hand-in-hand with service.
- ❖ *Ambition for the university and for the state.* North Carolina is a dynamic place, and the Triangle region is home to some of the most interesting and innovative work happening anywhere in the country. NC State has a leadership role in building up that ecosystem of talent and discovery, and it needs a leader with a compelling vision for the campus and the region. I want someone who's in it to win, to help North Carolina become *the* destination for talent and ambition.
- ❖ *An appreciation for the UNC System's governance and strategic goals.* We need someone who understands the value of a well-coordinated state university system and sees NC State's role within that broader context.
- ❖ *A deep comfort with the vibrant and diverse state that we serve.* North Carolina is a big place, diverse in its demographics, its politics, its geography, and anything else you want to measure. An effective leader needs to welcome and serve all.
- ❖ *An ethos of public service.* NC State is a crucial toolbox for policymakers and community leaders across the state, the place where people turn when they need help with an agricultural challenge, when there's an urgent engineering need, when data security needs tightening, NC State's leader must be ready to answer the call.
- ❖ *A focus on academic prowess and student success.* Academic excellence is the foundational strength of NC State, and its next leader needs a vision for recruiting talented students and supporting them on the path to graduation. That means appealing to students from across our state and around the world, building a campus culture where a student from small-town North Carolina gets to learn and work alongside classmates from across the globe.
- ❖ *Sound financial stewardship.* Careful stewardship, demonstrated by an ability to manage public and private resources in a way that's prudent, transparent, and disciplined.

- ❖ *An easy rapport with business partners, donors, and policymakers.* NC State has especially productive partnerships with the private sector, and its chancellor must feel right at home working alongside entrepreneurs, CEOs, and startup founders who support and enrich the campus ecosystem.
- ❖ *An appreciation for academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the role of the faculty in driving NCSU's success.* Talented scholars and teachers are the core of any great university, and NC State's leader must be able to earn trust, offer support, and make this a fantastic place for the best and brightest to do their work.
- ❖ *A commitment to operational excellence.* Applying sound management practices to advance the overall health and capability of the institution so that it can more easily achieve its goals.
- ❖ *Personal integrity.* Earning and keeping trust is vital in leading such an open and collaborative institution, and it demands the highest level of personal integrity.

That's an ambitious list, but it's what we need for North Carolina's largest public university. I'm confident we'll have a candidate pool that matches the promise of this place, and I'm genuinely excited to hear some talented leaders put forward their visions for NC State. We will cast a wide net and consider candidates close to home and across the world, people with traditional academic backgrounds and those with outside experience that speaks to the needs of this place. There is not a single, standard model for effective leadership of an institution this vast, and we will remain open to a broad range of candidates.

It's been an absolute privilege to serve alongside Randy Woodson these many years, and I am not eager to see his tenure come to a close. Our job is to find a successor who can make the most of a great situation, someone ready to run at the head of the Pack.

Search Process

Our process will respect state law, university policy, and well-established procedures for a professional, successful search. This includes adhering to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law and relevant provisions of the University Code. Ms. Newhart will provide greater detail on those requirements during today's meeting.

We'll be aided in our work by an executive search firm, ensuring we hear from the widest range of promising candidates. The process for selecting that firm is already underway and we'll hear additional details during today's meeting.

And we'll welcome input from across the NC State community, taking care that the many different constituents of this great university are heard with attention and respect. We'll take comments online, through listening forums, and in whatever format our search firm might suggest. The online survey was launched just a few weeks ago and already more than 4,000 people have responded with more still coming in. I believe this must be a System record. This level of response so early in the process shows the passion for this institution that I know will be felt throughout the entire search. This is a moment to energize the Wolfpack about the university's next era, and that means encouraging ideas and insight from all those who care about this place.

We're fortunate that Chancellor Woodson has given us a generous runway to complete this search and ensure a new leader is ready to pick up the baton without missing a step. I'm hoping we can do our part by completing this search in time for a new leader to start by the end of the academic year, giving Randy the smooth and celebratory senior year that he deserves.

I'm glad to be working alongside such distinguished advisory committee members, and I hope this will be an exciting time for NC State and for all of you. Selecting the next leader for one of the nation's premier public universities is a privilege and a joyful responsibility, and I know we'll do the Pack proud.